

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-30

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FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6167

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN PRIORITY

S E C R E T KABUL 8495

E X D I S

AMMAN FOR S/S PASS TO MR. SISCO

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, AF, US

SUBJECT: US-AFGHAN RELATIONS

REF: KABUL 8449

SUMMARY: PRESIDENT DAOUD TOLD ME DECEMBER 15 THAT OPPONENTS OF BOTH THE US AND AFGHANISTAN ARE TRYING TO SOW SEEDS OF SUSPICION BETWEEN US BUT THAT HE ATTACHES NO CREDENCE TO ANY SUCH SUSPICION. THIS WAS CLEARLY HIS WAY OF TELLING ME THAT THE EPISODE INVOLVING POSSIBLE US SUPPORT FOR THE MAIWANDWAL COUP ATTEMPT HAS ENDED.

1. I WAS SUMMONED TO SEE PRESIDENT DAOUD MORNING DEC. 15 IN RESPONSE TO AN EARLIER REQUEST I HAD MADE THROUGH DEPFONMIN ABDULLAH FOR AN OPPORTUNITY TO PRESENT THE MOON ROCK AND AN AFGHAN FLAG FROM THE APOLLO XVII MISSION TO THE MOON. THE PRESENTATION WAS IN FRONT OF CAMERAS, AND WILL CERTAINLY RECEIVE PUBLICITY LOCALLY. I ALSO TOOK THE OCCASION TO PRESENT TO DAOUD LEON POULLADA'S PERSONALLY INSCRIBED BOOK ON KING AMANULLAH.

2. BEFORE THE PRESENTATION, DAOUD ENGAGED ME IN A CONVERSATION WHICH LASTED ABOUT 15 MINUTES. HE SAID THAT AS A SOLDIER AND A POLITICIAN HE WOULD ALWAYS SPEAK TO ME FRANKLY BECAUSE HE BELIEVES THAT FRANKNESS IS THE BEST BASIS FOR UNDERSTANDING. HE WENT ON TO REPEAT WHAT HE HAD SAID IN OUR FIRST MEETING

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CONCERNING HIS DESIRE FOR CLOSE RELATIONS WITH THE US AND HIS

APPRECIATION FOR OUR PAST ASSISTANCE TO THE PEOPLE OF AFGHANISTAN. HE THEN SAID THAT BOTH OF OUR GOVERNMENTS ENCOUNTER OPPOSITION INTERNALLY AND EXTERNALLY. HE SAID THAT THIS OPPOSITION SOMETIMES ATTEMPTS TO STIR UP SUSPICION BETWEEN US, BUT THAT HE DOES NOT ATTACH ANY CREDENCE TO ANY SUCH SUSPICION.

3. I TOLD DAOUD THAT I APPRECIATED HIS FRANKNESS AND RECIPROCATED HIS DESIRE FOR CLOSE RELATIONS BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES.

4. COMMENT: DAOUD'S REMARKS WERE CLEARLY AIMED AT PUTTING AN END TO THE EPISODE CONCERNING POSSIBLE US INVOLVEMENT IN THE MAIWANDWAL COUP ATTEMPT. I GAVE HIM AN OPENING TO DISCUSS AFGHANISTAN'S RELATIONS WITH PAKISTAN BY REFERRING TO MY CONVERSATION BEFORE GETTING INTO ANY MATTERS OTHER THAN THE ONE REPORTED ABOVE. DAOUD APPEARED IN EXCELLENT HEALTH, AND A NUMBER OF OUR EXCHANGES PRODUCED PRESIDENTIAL CHUCKLES.
ELIOT

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